

Folk Dances of Haryana, List, Features, Cultural Significance

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Folk dances of Haryana are a lively reflection of the state's **simple, joyful, and community-centered lifestyle**. These dances are deeply connected to **everyday life, farming traditions, and seasonal celebrations**. Performed during **festivals, weddings, and social gatherings**, they bring people together and create a strong sense of **unity and belonging**. With **energetic movements, rhythmic music, and colorful traditional attire**, the folk dances of Haryana beautifully express the **emotions, traditions, and cultural spirit** of its people.

Famous Folk Dances of Haryana

Famous folk dances of Haryana reflect the state's rich **cultural traditions and vibrant lifestyle**. These dances are closely linked with **festivals, celebrations, and daily life**, expressing the **joy and energy** of the people. Performed with **rhythmic movements, lively music, and traditional attire**, they form an important part of Haryana's identity. The major folk dances are discussed below with their **key features and significance**.

1. Phag Dance

- **Phag Dance** is a joyful **spring and harvest dance** performed during the month of **Phalgun**, when the winter season ends and crops are ready.
- Both **men and women participate**, expressing happiness and relief after months of hard farming work.
- Women wear **bright and colorful traditional dresses**, while men tie **vibrant turbans**, adding to the festive look.
- The dance includes **simple yet energetic movements**, often accompanied by singing and clapping.
- It reflects the **celebration of nature, prosperity, and new beginnings** in rural Haryana.

2. Saang Dance (Swang)

- **Saang Dance** is a unique **folk theatre and dance form** that combines **storytelling, acting, and music**.
- It is performed by a group of **10-12 people**, usually in **open public spaces**, making it accessible to everyone.
- The dance presents **religious stories, folk tales, and moral lessons**, often lasting for several hours.
- A special feature is **cross-dressing**, where male performers dress as female characters to enact roles.
- The word *Saang* means **“disguise or imitation”**, highlighting its dramatic nature.
- It is believed to have been shaped into its present form by **Kishan Lal Bhaat in the 18th century**.

3. Chhathi Dance

- **Chhathi Dance** is a **ritual dance performed by women** to celebrate the birth of a **male child**.
- It takes place on the **sixth day after the child's birth**, usually during the night.
- The dance is filled with **joy, blessings, and emotional expressions**, reflecting family happiness.
- Women sing and dance together, creating a **warm and festive atmosphere**.
- At the end, **boiled wheat and chana** are distributed, symbolizing sharing of happiness.
- It highlights **traditional beliefs and social customs** related to childbirth in Haryana.

4. Khoria Dance

- **Khoria Dance** is a **women-only dance** mainly performed during **weddings**, especially when men are away in the baraat (wedding procession).
- It is inspired by the **Jhumar dance style**, with graceful steps and rhythmic movements.
- Women wear **colorful skirts, dupattas, and traditional jewelry**, enhancing the beauty of the performance.
- The dance includes **playful songs and expressions**, often reflecting daily life and relationships.
- Movements start slowly and gradually become **faster and more energetic**.
- It represents **women's bonding, creativity, and joy** during special occasions.

5. Dhamal Dance

- **Dhamal Dance** is a powerful **male-only dance** popular in the **Gurgaon region**, especially among the **Ahir community**.
- It is believed to have roots in the time of the **Mahabharata**, giving it historical importance.

- The dance is performed **after a good harvest**, expressing gratitude and happiness.
- Men form a **semi-circle**, sing loudly, and move energetically to the beats of drums.
- Before starting, they often **offer prayers to Lord Ganesha, Goddess Bhavani, and the Trinity**.
- It reflects **strength, unity, and devotion**, along with celebration of success.

6. Daph Dance

- **Daph Dance** is a **seasonal folk dance** performed during the **spring season** by farmers.
- It celebrates a **good harvest and prosperity**, marking a joyful time for rural communities.
- The main musical instrument used is the '**Daph**' (**a one-sided drum**), which gives the dance its name.
- Women's ornaments also create **rhythmic sounds**, adding to the musical effect.
- The dance involves **simple, rhythmic steps**, making it easy and enjoyable for group participation.
- It represents **harmony between people, music, and nature**.

7. Ghoomar Dance

- **Ghoomar Dance** is a graceful and **circular dance form** popular in the **western parts of Haryana**.
- It is mostly performed by **young girls**, especially during festivals like **Holi, Teej, and Gangaur**.
- The dancers move in **circles, clapping and twirling**, creating a visually beautiful pattern.
- As the music speeds up, dancers form pairs and spin **faster with great coordination**.
- Songs sung during the dance are often filled with **humor, satire, and social themes**.
- It reflects **joy, celebration, and feminine grace**.

8. Jhumar Dance

- **Jhumar Dance** is named after a traditional ornament called "**Jhumar**".
- It is mainly performed by **young married women**, especially during festive occasions.
- The dance includes **graceful swaying movements and gentle spins**, giving it a soft and elegant feel.
- Performers wear **colorful attire and traditional jewelry**, enhancing the visual appeal.
- It is accompanied by instruments like **dholak and thali**, creating a rhythmic background.
- In some regions, it is also known as "**Haryanvi Gidda**".

9. Gugga Dance

- **Gugga Dance** is a **devotional dance** performed in honor of **Gugga Pir**, a respected local saint.
- It is performed mainly by **men during religious processions**.
- Dancers sing songs of **praise and devotion** while moving around the saint's shrine.
- The performance creates a **spiritual and emotional atmosphere** among devotees.
- It reflects **faith, belief, and community participation** in religious traditions.

10. Loor Dance

- **Loor Dance** is performed by **young girls** during the **spring season (Phalguna)**, especially around **Holi**.
- It celebrates the **arrival of spring and the sowing of Rabi crops**.

- The dance is known for its **question-answer style songs**, making it interactive and fun.
- Girls wear **traditional attire like ghagra, kurti, and chundri**, adding vibrant colors.
- It expresses **youthfulness, joy, and seasonal celebration**.

11. Ras Leela Dance

- **Ras Leela Dance** is a **devotional dance drama** based on the life of **Lord Krishna**.
- It was traditionally popular in the **Braja region of Faridabad**.
- The dance includes **songs, storytelling, and expressive movements** depicting Krishna's divine acts.
- Performers wear **colorful costumes with embroidery and mirror work**, enhancing the visual appeal.
- It creates a sense of **spiritual joy and devotion**, connecting people with mythology.
- This dance highlights the **religious and cultural depth** of Haryana's traditions.

Folk Dances of Haryana Cultural Significance

- Folk dances like **Phag Dance, Loor Dance, and Daph Dance** reflect the strong connection of people with **agriculture and seasonal cycles**, especially celebrating **harvests and spring festivals**.
- Dances such as **Saang Dance and Ras Leela Dance** highlight **religious devotion and storytelling traditions**, presenting tales from **mythology and local folklore**.
- **Dhamal Dance and Paika-like martial elements (in spirit)** showcase the **strength, bravery, and warrior traditions**, especially among communities like the **Ahirs**.
- Folk forms like **Khoria Dance and Jhumar Dance** emphasize **women's participation, social bonding, and family traditions**, especially during **weddings and festive occasions**.
- **Gugga Dance** represents **faith and devotion**, as it is performed in honor of **Gugga Pir**, showing the importance of **local beliefs and spiritual practices**.
- Folk dances of Haryana act as a medium of **cultural preservation and unity**, passing down **traditions, values, music, and customs** from one generation to another.

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